

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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STATE FOR NEA/ARP
PASS TO NSF FOR DR. AVERCH AND DR. BARTOCHA
E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: USSAEC
SUBJECT: SANCST: DISCUSSION OF FUTURE PROGRAM WITH DIRECTOR-DESIGNATE
OBAID

REF: OSAA 1285 OF 9/29/77

1. DR. DR. RIDA OBAID, DIRECTOR-DESIGNATE OF THE SAUDI
ARABIAN NATIONAL CENTER FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(SANCST) MET ON NOVEMBER 1 WITH DR. GILBERT DEVEY,
DIRECTOR, MIDDLE EAST PROGRAMS, NSF, TED WAHL OF
USREP AND TED ROSEN OF OSAA. FOLLOWING ARE MAIN
POINTS COVERED:

2. VISAS. DR. OBAID SAID NON-ISSUANCE OF VISAS TO
NSF SENIOR OFFICIALS, DR. AVERCH AND DR. BARTOCHA,
AND THE DIFFICULTY IN OBTAINING DR. DEVEY'S VISA
WERE "VERY EMBARRASSING" AND SAID HE WOULD TRY TO TAKE
MATTER UP WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY (SEE USLO RIYADH 282).

3. BIO-SALINE CONFERENCE. DEVEY PROVIDED INFORMAL
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REPORT ON OCTOBER BIO-SALINE CONFERENCE IN SOUTH
CAROLINA AND PROMISED TO SEND OFFICIAL SUMMARY TO
DR. OBAID IN ABOUT ONE MONTH. DEVEY SAID CONFERENCE
WAS WELL RECEIVED AND EXPRESSED HOPE SANCST WOULD
SUPPORT RESEARCH IN BIO-SALINE AREA.

4. ESTABLISHMENT OF SANCST. MR. WAHL SAID DEPUTY

FOREIGN MINISTER ALIREZA HAD INDICATED TO OUR EMBASSY THAT MFA HAD REVIEWED DRAFT OF SANCST BY-LAWS AND HAD CONCURRED WITH MINOR CHANGES. DR. OBAID SAID THAT TO THE BEST OF HIS KNOWLEDGE THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HAD APPROVED THE BY-LAWS AND THE ROYAL DECREE WAS READY TO BE FORWARDED TO KING KHALID FOR APPROVAL. HE DID NOT KNOW WHEN THIS LONG-AWAITED FINAL STEP TO ESTABLISH SANCST WOULD BE TAKEN, NOTING THAT HE HAD BEEN PROMISED ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS AS EARLY AS APRIL 1977 THAT THE DECREE WAS ABOUT TO BE ISSUED. ALTHOUGH ARRANGEMENTS HAD BEEN MADE TO FREE HIM FROM HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AT RIYADH UNIVERSITY, HE SAID HE WAS CONTINUING TO LECTURE THERE PENDING FINAL ACTION ON SANCST.

5. CHARACTER OF SANCST. DR. OBAID SAID THAT SANCST WOULD HAVE A BOARD WITH BROAD REPRESENTATION FROM INTERESTED MINISTRIES, MAJOR UNIVERSITIES AND INDUSTRIAL FIRMS. HE STRESSED THAT SANCST IS TO SERVE AS A CATALYST AND MECHANISM FOR ASSISTING IN SCIENTIFIC PURSUITS ALONG THE LINES OF NSF RATHER THAN BECOME AN INDEPENDENT COMPETITIVE RESEARCH INSTITUTE.

7. FIRST ACTIVITIES OF SANCST. DEVEY SAID HE THOUGHT THE ORIGINAL PROJECT AGREEMENT FOR SANCST WAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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STILL SOUND. DR. OBAID AGREED, ADDING THAT HE VIEWED THE SCIENTIFIC RESOURCES INVENTORY, OUTLINED IN THE AGREEMENT, AS BEING THE FIRST STEP. A TDY TEAM SHOULD COME TO SAUDI ARABIA SOON AFTER SANCST IS ESTABLISHED TO PREPARE THE SURVEY AND POSSIBLY OTHER ACTIVITIES. ALSO A NSF LIAISON OFFICER/PROJECT DIRECTOR WOULD BE NEEDED. DR. DEVEY PROVIDED DR. OBAID WITH A PAPER DATED OCTOBER 20, 1977, WHICH SUGGESTS AN APPROACH TO ACCOMPLISH THE SURVEY. IT WAS AGREED THAT IN ORDER TO AVOID DUPLICATION OF EFFORT, EXISTING INFORMATION SOURCES SUCH AS THE CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF STATISTICS WOULD BE UTILIZES WHEREVER POSSIBLE.

7. INTERIM FUNDING. \$4. OBAID ASKED FOR AN EXECUTIVE REPORT OF NSF/SANCST ACTIVITIES OF THE PAST THREE MONTHS. HE WOULD ATTACH THIS REPORT TO A REQUEST TO THE SAG COORDINATOR FOR ADDITIONAL INTERIM FUNDING BEYOND DECEMBER 31, 1977, WHEN THE CURRENT \$55,000 WILL RUN OUT. DR. DEVEY SAID HE WOULD PREPARE AND SEND THIS REPORT UPON HIS RETURN TO WASHINGTON.

8. WE WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE SUMMARY OF DEVEY'S DIS-

CUSSIONS AT UPM AND ABDUL AZIZ UNIVERSITY.
GNEHM

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